

THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF DECATUR COUNTY

Vol. 4, No. 97

Greensburg, Indiana

January, 1984

OCCASION: Winter Meeting

DATE: Sunday, January 8, 1984  
2:00 P.M.

PLACE: First Baptist Church  
Social Hall  
209 W. Washington St.

PROGRAM: The Viewfinders, local camera club, will put on the entertainment for the gathering. Very eye-catching it will be. "One picture is worth a thousand words", so this should be seen by one and all. The committee asks that you bring OLD PICTURES AND OLD CAMERAS for a picturesque display. Refreshments will follow a short business session. Print this event upon your mind, a pleasant way to spend a January Sunday afternoon. See you!

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MUSEUM SIGN - Although the sign has been up sometime, it is relatively new and was donated by John Oliger. John and Earl Vanderbur were the hanging committee. The Society is very appreciative of this much needed addition to the Museum.

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WELCOME to a fine group of NEW MEMBERS

Ivan Abrell	John Meek	Stacy Plumbing & Heating
Ben Morris	Mrs. Freida Meek	D. S. Patton, Long Beach, CA
H. T. Staples	Charles Riddle, Jr.	Dr. James Howell, Anchorage, AK
David Holman	Mrs. Jean Riddle	Mrs. Kim Howell, Anchorage, AK
Shafter Jackson	John Westhafer	Mrs. Alfred Johnson, Terre Haute, IN
Gordon Stacy	Mrs. Sandra Westhafer	Mrs. Wm. Shassere, Indianapolis, IN
Todd Nelson	Dr. Steven Stradley	Mrs. Bartil Ostrom, Nyssa, OR
James Sturges	Mrs. Mary Stradley	John Becker, Cincinnati, OH
Don Layton	Mayor Shel Smith	Carl Becker, Cincinnati, OH
Oren Harrison	Mrs. Elizabeth Smith	Elmer Jolliff
David Johnston	Mrs. Herbert Hunter	Mrs. Marguerite Jolliff
Don Taylor	Mrs. Tom Pratt	Mrs. Wm. Brock, Pembroke Pines, FL
William Blasdel	William Bate	Robert Wright, Sacramento, CA
Ross Davis	Mrs. Carlene Bate	Rebecca Hardin, Mooresville, IN
Joyce Konzelman		

PRESIDENT'S SAY SO - I give my personal "thank you" to Allan Beall, Winton Brown, and Voyle Morgan for the great Fall Tour. Hard working chairman, Allan, is one of those versatile members of the Society who always comes through with any job he undertakes. Voyle serves the Society as a trustee and is an enthusiastic member, and Winton is a brand new member who didn't hesitate to say he would serve on the committee. We are grateful for members like these.

Be sure and bring your old or unusual cameras and photographs to the January 8th meeting. the updated history book (1915-1985) of our county project may or may not be underway at this writing. Two people are now considering being co-chairpersons of the project. If it is done, volunteers will be needed from each township. The Society will be celebrating its 25th anniversary next year. I'm sure that 3 or 4 members would like to oversee what should be a special occasion for us. If you have ideas or would like to volunteer, please call me at 663-2478. (I expect many calls because this should be fun.)  
Pat Smith



NAME - The Greensburg Library, not too long ago, became the library for all of Decatur County. It is the hope of some that the name Carnegie will be kept in the new title. Such as: Decatur County Carnegie Library. Thus it will be remembered by those coming along later, from whence came the incentive to start a library in the community.

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THANK YOU - "Please accept our sincerest thanks to you and all of the faithful volunteers who opened the Decatur County Historical Society Museum for our visit last Saturday. Your Society has done a tremendous job these past two years and have acquired quite a sizeable collection over the years. I'm sure Greensburg citizens are very proud of their Historical Museum....."

Society of Indiana Pioneers  
October 18, 1983

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DELTA FAUCET - Did you know this local manufacturer of the World's Best Faucet furnishes the paper, prints, and collates this, THE BULLETIN? One of their community services for which the Historical Society is deeply grateful.

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NEW CORRESPONDING SECRETARY - Betty Woodfill has agreed to fill the unexpired term of Connie Polston.

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BALLOON RACE - It is hoped you were one of the lucky ones to attend this event during the Fall festival in September. As this year is the 200th anniversary of man's first flight, it was a quite proper spectacle to sponsor. Very colorful and spectacular entertainment, it certainly must be an annual event.  
ed.

VIDA LOUCKS was announced the winner of the \$50. U.S. Bond offered for the earliest, hitherto unknown, printed, written, or photographed item relating to Decatur County. Congratulations to Vida, it could not have been a more appropriate person. Although Mrs. Loucks now resides in Florida, She is still one of the county's foremost historians, and has been very generous to the Museum with various items.

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CHECK YOUR MAILING LABEL - If there is a red asterisk (\*) on it your 1984 dues have not been paid, yet. Please get them in by Jan. 1, 1984.  
Historical Society of Decatur Co  
P.O. Box 163  
Greensburg, IN 47240

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WE ARE GROWING - The Society now has 619 members in 27 states and Israel. (Dr. Joel Newman)

FALL TOUR - On Sunday afternoon October 23, 1983 the Decatur County Historical Society's annual Fall Tour led us north and east to the city of Connersville. While the fall colors were at their peak, the brilliance was subdued somewhat by dark clouds and dripping skies. The tour group was philosophical about the weather and displayed warm smiles and sunny dispositions in spite of the precipitation.

About 36 intrepid explorers boarded Cecil Hull's bus and ventured forth into the unknown. Two more timid souls followed along in their car to pick up the pieces.

When the historians arrived in the city named for John Conner founder and first citizen we were greeted by our tour guide, Mr. William Morrett who ushered us into the building known as the Canal House.

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This edifice was erected in the 1840's and served as the office and headquarters of the Whitewater Canal Co. After the decline of the canal operation it was used as a private dwelling by Congressman Finley Gray. Later the V.F.W. used it for club rooms and finally a nonprofit group called Historic Connersville, Inc. took title to the building and have restored it.

It is furnished with pieces in keeping with its early history, and one can easily imagine himself stepping back over a century in time on entering this beautiful old building.

After hearing about the acquisition and restoration of the canal house, a brief business meeting was conducted by our first Vice-President, James Gaynor, in the absence of President Pat Smith.

Then, for a change of pace, we boarded our bus, and after traveling through several blocks of the downtown area, arrived at the new Fayette County Library. There we were given the grand tour and allowed to view all the excellent facilities of that institution. Our tour happened to coincide with their first open house so the library board and staff were more than pleased to see a busload of visitors.

We were treated to punch and cookies which were most appreciated by the weary tourists. In fact one of the very young hostesses really pushed the cookies to the point that some of the group overindulged in order to be polite.

After boarding the bus and traveling a few blocks, we saw a very early fire station. Not very impressive as size goes. It is hardly as big as a one car garage, but a genuine antique. Next we traveled to the high school complex, quite a number of elementary and high school buildings which are very modern and up to date.

From the school the tour followed a portion of the old canal southward and at the southern city limits turned into the grounds of Elmhurst, a huge and impressive mansion. Elmhurst was so named by Jean Hunter's mother when her folks owned & operated a sanatorium in the manion. It is currently owned by the Masonic Lodge. This building dates back to 1831 when Oliver H. Smith, a U.S. senator built a four room house that forms the central part of this huge structure.

It later belonged to Caleb B. Smith who was secretary of the interior in President Lincoln's cabinet. Samuel Parker, a U.S. representative was the next owner and he sold it to James Huston who was chairman of the state republican committee during Benjamin Harrison's campaign for the presidency. Harrison is said to have visited here many times and after his election he appointed Huston treasurer of the United States. George Markle was next in line but three years later turned it over to a Miss Cressler and a Miss Sumner who conducted a girls school. The girls school was moved to New England in 1925, and then it was used for one year as the Penton Military Institute. For quite a number of years it stood unoccupied until the Masonic Order took possession and at the present time uses it for their lodge meetings. The building and grounds are beautifully maintained and are quite a sight to behold.

After leaving Elmhurst we crossed the road and saw the headquarters and facilities of the Whitewater Railroad which runs excursion trains through the Whitewater Valley on a regular basis.

Next we were treated to a view of the local scrap yard and some abandoned factory buildings, not so pleasing to the eye perhaps, but in an industr-

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ial society, these places seem to be a necessity. After bidding our tour guide farewell at the Canal House, our bus headed up the hill westward toward home.

Allan Beall

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### CHARLES T. POWNER

The wind more resembled a whirlwind on Saturdays during the early 1920s at Powner's Book Shop on the corner of Clark Street opposite the City Hall. "Saturday", an onlooker observed, "is the great book boxes men of all walks of life sit around, prosperous business men, millionaires, .....students, newspaper men... all...linked by a common love. They are all ardent book collectors."

But it was a "scrambling mass" of bookhunters who bombarded the stalls in front of Powner's Shop where Roman antiquities vied with books on sports or "old poetry." Indeed, on Powner's "quarter counter" one Chicago prince of serendipity found "a first edition of Rousseau's Emile with Rousseau's autograph presentation inscription to the King and the royal coat of arms on the binding." In exchange for 75 cents he pocketed the treasure. The reaction of the proprietor was almost as unique as the volume. "Such things may happen," said Mr. Powner, "I am glad he got it."

Charles Tracy Powner of Indiana was a 55-year-old Hoosier schoolmaster when he decided to give up his lifework and become a bookseller. a quiet man, scholarly-looking, he had long been exposed to books and documentary collections. In 1889, when the Decatur County courthouse was remodeled, many valuable local records were destroyed. Despite Powner's protest, the documents were abandoned or sold as junk. In 1901 Powner was appointed official collector of the Indiana State Library, combining his tasks with teaching in Greensburg, Indiana. Two years later he moved to Chicago, but it was not until 1908, in his mid-50s, that he set up the first Powner bookstore in the Old Methodist Church Block on North Clark Street. It would be followed by other stores--the Antiquarian Book Store on East Van Buren, another on West Madison, and still another on North Clark Street where Powner's operated in a three-story neo-Gothic brick building with book stalls in the front and a rare book room on the second floor. Indeed, in the 20 years Charles T. Powner devoted to book selling he built up a chain of stores in four cities.

The Chicago store boasted a varied stock of Americana, occult and metaphysical, rare and curious. It might yield a sleeper like the inscribed Rousseau Emile or a first American Laus Veneris of Swinburne. Powner's partiality for association copies, rare and first editions, and Mark Twain first was variants was reflected in his holding. In 1915 he acquired the bulk of the stock of the Morris Book Shop--another example of the interconnections traceable in the history of the antizuarian trade. Powner's was "The House of a Million Books," but among the million were always a few rare gems.

Perhaps the rarest was Charles T. Powner himself, a man who came late to the trade he loved, who viewed with equanimity the sale of a unique sleeper, and who died, in 1920, as all bookmen should die, "in bed with a volume of Mark Twain propped up before him."

(Charles T. Powner taught in Decatur County Schools during the 1880s and 1890s. His father, William H. Powner, was the first Superintendent of the county schools. This article, from  
(cont'd on page 5)



Bookman's Weekly, was furnished by Helen Powner Mann, daughter of Mr. Powner.) ed.

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## DR. HURTY COMES TO TOWN

Dr. John N. Hurty (1852-1925) was a pioneer in public health, and an early state health officer of Indiana. His work and philosophy are described in his biography THE HOOSIER HEALTH OFFICER, by Thurman B. Rice, M.D. According to Dr. Rice, Dr. Hurty by his own admission, was considered something of a crank for wanting to spend public money on public health measures.

In the fall of 1897, Dr. Hurty came to Greensburg in his capacity of state health officer. He made what he termed a "sanitary inspection" of the city schools, of which there were two, the East End and the West End. The high school and a grade school occupied the West End building which as described by Dr. Hurty, consisted of an old part with three floors, and a newer part with two floors. Dr. Hurty found the East End not too bad. The West End he considered essentially beyond reclamation.

Newspaper clippings in a scrapbook belonging to the Decatur County Historical Society give a partial account of Dr. Hurty's campaign to better the physical environment of Greensburg's schools. The city evidently took pride in economy in school administration, and at times the campaign resembled the meeting of the irresistible force and the immovable object. The clippings end before the story reaches a conclusion, but as nearly as can be determined from later newspapers, the end was just coming into view in December, 1899, or about two years after Dr. Hurty's visit.

The opening of school for the year 1897--98 was announced on September 10th in an unidentified paper. Greensburg had 798 pupils and twenty-two teachers. One high school teacher had been added, but at no additional expense, as the new teacher's salary of \$450.00 was covered by non-resident students' tuition of \$497.00. Harmony prevailed, and never, declared the paper, had prospects been brighter for a good school year. Within a month the brightness had begun to fade.

On October 11 and 12, the DAILY NEWS carried a two-part contributed article, unsigned, but the writer identified himself as a teacher. Whether he may have written with the blessing of his superiors is a good question, as his style certainly was not that of a person who feared for his job. The article evidently had been preceded by a complaint about teachers' horses hitched at the West End. The writer began by saying that if the man who had been "kicking about horses" could kick hard enough to bring the state health officer to town, the health officer would see in the school yard a worse nuisance than that created by the horses.

This nuisance was a wooden structure thirty feet by five feet, located sixty feet behind the building, and housing the outdoor plumbing. It was dirty, and its odors perceptible in rooms on the back of the building, where sat pupils studying in physiology about the evils of cess-pools. Two hundred boys (surely not in a body) had to be processed through the wooden structure in fifteen minutes in order to make room for an equal number of girls, who had been drinking at the hydrants. Or, "Ladies First" may have been the order of the day; protocol in the

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the matter was not clearly defined. Question; Was the wooden structure unisex? Answer; Yes. Single-facility schools are mentioned in THE HOOSIER HEALTH OFFICER, though the author believed them to have been rural phenomena, for the most part.

The writer of the article had a good bit to say about the size of the school drinking cup. (Individual cups seem not to have been given any thought in 1897; acceptable procedure was thorough rinsing of the common cup before use.) The "rules" (state board of health regulation) specified a one-fourth pint cup, but the West End cup held one pint. As children's tendency to drink to capacity was commented on, the writer's concern about the cup may have been an administrative one. After all, he was a teacher, and would not percolation of four hundred quarter pints of water produce fewer interruptions of the school day than percolation of four hundred whole pints?

Conditions inside the West End were no better than those outside. The windows had "wooden blinds on hinges" which could not be closed against glare without excluding too much light. Rooms were crowded, and ventilation poor. Pupils had learned to calculate the amount of oxygen needed by X number of persons in a room of X size for X number of hours; the oxygen supply in some classrooms was shown to give out within minutes. Windows could not be opened because of drafts, and some of the already scanty air was consumed by gas radiators used for heating. The air was also dusty. Each evening, the floors were dry-swept. Each morning, the dust which had settled was stirred up with a feather duster, but not soon enough to allow it to settle again before the children arrived. Under such conditions, the writer said, it was impossible to teach health or enforce the truancy laws.

He quoted an order of the local board of health on proper maintenance of school buildings, showing that practically everything ordered was lacking at the West End. While he understood there was no money for schools, a banker had said Greensburg was the richest town in the state for its size. There was money for streets, assuring a smooth ride to the cemetery for those children who would die from diseases contracted at school. The writer built to a conclusion in which he drew on the physiology text, the New Testament, and Abraham Lincoln. His message was approximately as follows: Health is the greatest asset. Children come to school to learn, not to have their health impaired. To be borne in mind in this connection is the passage about being drowned in the depth of the sea with the millstone hanged about the neck. Let us improve our schools "With malice toward none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right as God gives us to see the right..."

The school board was to prove itself firm in the right, as seen, but its three members seemed to have been given to see the right in differing perspectives. And if malice did not enter, politics did, for at one time the president of the school board was in a race for mayor with the editor of one of the newspapers.

Enter Dr. Hurty, no later than October 20, the date of his inspection report, which was not made public until the first of the year, when the situation had begun to heat up. It can be conjectured that some of his orders had been carried out by that time. Those pertaining to the gas radiators had been ignored, and were to become the chief point at issue. To the school board, the point was a financial one, as the radiators apparently had been installed because gas was cheaper than coal. This may have been during the natural gas boom.

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Greensburg declared its intentions on December 29, 1897, in an item marked "Special to INDIANAPOLIS JOURNAL". (Source not given.) Dr. Hurty had condemned the radiators, and had ordered their removal during the Christmas vacation. The school board, unwilling to spend \$3000 to \$4000 on heating costs, had hired a lawyer, and was preparing to fight the order. This announcement probably came as no surprise to Dr. Hurty. According to THE HOOSIER HEALTH OFFICER, Dr. Hurty, upon receiving a bad report on a school, would make an inspection, and notify the authorities of what would have to be done. Then trouble would begin, as nowhere did officials want to gain reputations for spending tax money on the costly fads of a "crank." The attitude is understandable in light of its time, when knowledge of disease was less extensive than at present.

On December 30, the NEWS commented that "those parties" who could not trust the local health board to take of local health problems had started something bigger than they had counted on. Dr. Hurty was not to be blamed--he was only doing his duty.

On January 1, 1898, a letter to the NEWS stated that Dr. Hurty had gone too far; he should have stopped with ordering renovation of the outhouses. Not everyone agreed with his ideas about heating and ventilating. Gas radiators were not without hazards, but were safe in schools if competently supervised. In fact, they were beneficial, as humidity was provided by the water vapor given off. Greensburg was hoping the Odd Fellows would locate their state children's home here; bad publicity about the schools was not helping the cause.

With the headline "Heard From", Dr. Hurty's inspection report appeared in the NEWS on January 3. The doctor had requested publication as a means of informing parents of dangerous conditions in the schools. He advised parents to take their children out of school until something had been done, and said he would allow his own children to grow up uneducated in preference to sending them to schools like Greensburg's. He went on to say the schools had been inspected at the request of the school board, and the findings reported to the board on October 20. His recommendations were the only ones possible in the circumstances, which really called for new buildings. If the recommendations could not be carried out, the schools should be closed.

To a considerable extent, the report followed the items in the two-part article, and concerned the West End more than the East. The East End could get by if new outhouses were built, the radiators removed, and a furnace already in place put back into operation.

The West End needed scrubbing and disinfection, and installation of window blinds which would roll up from the bottom and down from the top. Some of the rooms were seriously overcrowded. For adequate ventilation, there should be no more than forty pupils per room. The number per room in the grades at West End ranged from Twenty-nine to sixty-six. The preferred method of heating was with a combination system which drew in fresh air, warmed, circulated, and exchanged it, but as the equipment was hard to install in an existing building, window boards were advised as a means of securing fresh air without drafts. The gas radiators would have to go, and use of coal stoves resumed.

The wooden structure in the rear would also have to go. It was to be replaced with brick buildings (two) without vaults, which Dr. Hurty declared a "barbarism". His substitute fails to impress the modern mind as the product of an advanced civilization: The instructions; (Instead (cont'd on page 8)



of a vault) "Provide beneath the seats heavy wooden drawers well tarred and pitched, which can be easily removed from the back." Each drawer was to contain three inches of dry earth, and each stall a container of earth and a small scoop for adding earth to the drawer. The instructions even required the scoops to be on chains--no doubt a wise precaution against having all those little scoops adrift.

If the NEWS had not blamed Dr. Hurty, neither did it support him. In its issue containing his report, it called his orders unreasonable and unseasonable. The work with the radiators and stoves would take weeks, and why must it be done right then? Attendance was good. Closing the schools would affect those pupils who had to work, and so attended mainly in the winter months. Besides, the teachers' pay would have to go on while school was out.

The INDIANAPOLIS JOURNAL took up the story, and its account appeared in the NEWS on January 8. The state board of health had said the school board was determined to kill pupils with gas radiators. According to the school board, certain physicians had pronounced the radiators harmless, to which the health board had replied the physicians were showing their ignorance. Dr. Hurty, with the state superintendent of schools and the deputy state attorney general were about to go to Greensburg to start legal proceedings if the school board did not move in regard to the radiators.

The school board was not taken to court, however, and the headlines proclaimed, "Our City Dads Convene and Knock the Spots Off the Radiator Question!" (Paper unidentified; no date.) Dr. Hurty had met with the "dads", and a compromise had been effected. The radiators could stay, but only until school was out in the spring, and they would have to be fitted with flues. In the spring, a modernization program would be started. Said the REVIEW on January 8, in reporting what appears to have been the same meeting "Thus ends a scene in a little local farce which might well be entitled Much Ado About Nothing." After this, the clippings become scarce, though the ado evidently continued.

On July 30, the NEWS (?) noted that a new school board had been appointed, and had consulted Dr. Hurty about the terms on which school could be held in 1898-99. The terms were not stated, but were said to be satisfactory. It was "virtually assured" that no construction would be undertaken until spring. (That would have been the spring of 1899. So much for the modernization program scheduled for the spring of 1898.) Also, a contractor had been found to overhaul the East End furnace. For \$481.00 (materials and labor), he would guarantee seventy-two degrees with perfect ventilation, even in coldest weather--but the school board was going to withhold half the contract price until February, to be sure the furnace was working right.

The last two clippings dealt with the political aspects of the situation. (the mayoral race will be recalled). One clipping represented an exchange between the REVIEW and the NEW ERA, which were of opposite persuasions. The other contained the letter of "Republican Taxpayer", probably to the REVIEW. His opinion appeared to be that political maneuvering by a certain individual of the REVIEW'S party had been getting in the way of progress in school renewal.

Nothing could be learned of events occurring in the remainder of 1898. the following items from a bound volume of the GREENSBURG STANDARD for 1899 suggest that Greensburg may have become reconciled to the idea

(cont'd on page 9)



that school improvements were going to take place. In fairness it should perhaps be said that the school boards never actively opposed anything except removal of the radiators, and even in that matter, opposition may really have been defensiveness.

STANDARD, March 31, 1899. Work was expected to start soon on the West End. May 26. The low bid on the West End work was \$16,990. the contract to be awarded as soon as the city council had voted the money. The building project would provide nine more rooms and an assembly hall sixty by seventy-eight feet.

June 9. The council had voted \$24,000 in bonds for the West End work. Plans were to convert the third floor of the old building into an assembly hall. "Alumni Hall" in the old, or "Alumni" building having been taken over for study and recitation rooms. Inside toilets were to be provided. Part of the old building would get a new roof.

June-23. Work was being pushed on the schools and the I.O.O.F. Home. The same contractor had both jobs, and over one hundred men were employed.

August 25. The council passed the sale of (school?) bonds in the amount of \$12,000.

September 1. The high school was to open Monday, September 18. The grade schools would open Monday, October 9, immediately following "The World's Biggest Street Fair". Four grades would occupy temporary quarters outside the buildings (plural) for a month. The work was going well.

September 22. High school had opened at the East End. The West End would not be ready for several weeks.

October 13. Three of the city's teachers-elect had visited schools at Shelbyville.

October 20. "It is now thought that our city schools will open in full blast one week from next Wednesday.:

October 27. Notice from superintendent of schools. The grades would start Monday, October 30 at both building. "All will be accommodated."

November 24. "Our city schools are in splendid shape now, although at some disadvantage on account of the unfinished West End building. The new building will not be ready until January 1." Total enrollment was 901.

December 29. The Odd Fellows old folks' and orphan' home was nearing completion.

Here occurred another gap in the story, with sources for plugging the gap not readily available. Was the West End's "new building" ready by January 1, 1900? Barring a miracle, probably not.

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I would like to thank two persons who gave me information after reading my View From the Hack. Mrs. Sarah Newman located the post office a few doors farther west on West Main Street than I had remembered it. Mr. William Parker described the method of sounding the fire whistle  
(cont'd on page 10)



that told the firemen where the fire was.

Anna J. Foley  
(Anna J. Foley, a member of the Society, does a fine job of researching her articles, and writes in a very enjoyable style. THE BULLETIN is real happy to publish her work. Editor.)

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THE OLD WATER MILL IN THE VALLEY BELOW  
Charles W. Neal in the ST. PAUL TELEGRAM

It stands in the valley deserted, alone;  
It's glories departed, it's usefulness flown;  
Left o'er to time's ravages, yielding at last,  
'Tis passing--this link 'twixt the present and past.  
Time was when it's proud crest was rear'd mid'st the trees  
And sweetest of fragrance was borne on the breeze,  
From wild-flow'rs that then on the hillside did grow,  
Near the old water-mill in the valley below.

Time was when the farmer's boy oft could be seen  
To pass over hill and thro' valley so green;  
Astride of a nag that, tho' aged and blind,  
Could still tote the grist, with the boy on behind.  
Now whistling--now singing a snatch of a song.  
The lad, with a kick, bide the old horse "g'long!"  
Down the hill, 'cross the stream near the dam they go,  
To'rd the old water-mill in the valley below.

'Ere long the old nag fetches up at the door,  
And pauses, midst rattle and rumble and roar,  
Nor heeds he the din, but stands quiet and still;  
He has long since "made friends" with the old water-mill.  
"Hello!" rings the voice of the lad shrill and clear  
'Tis heard by the miller, who soon does appear,  
And grasping the grist, thro' the doorway does go  
Of the old water-mill in the valley below.

'Tis a skeleton grim that now strads by the stream--  
A ghost of the past, to one's mind it would seem;  
Not a window remains--not a shutter or door;  
The roof's falling in--the great wheel is no more.  
The stream as it rushes and gurgles along,  
Seems mourning the loss--ah, how plaintive it's song,  
As winding away in it's course it does go--  
Past the old water-mill in the valley below.

'Tis but an old land-mark--'twill soon pass away;  
How sad that 'tis thus given o'er to decay.  
Tho' by time's ruthless hand, it be razed to the ground,  
Methinks in it's fate, there's a simile found.  
'Tis thus with a mortal, as time passes by;  
Bereft of his vigor--how slender the tie  
That binds him to life; oft along left to go--  
Passing on, like the mill in the valley below.

SKETCH OF MILL

A fast decaying landmark at St. Paul familiar to the people of the  
(cont'd on page 11)



lower half of Orange township, Russ county, is the old Paul flour mill, a short way below St. Paul on Flatrock. The mill was erected in 1844 by John P. Paul. The timber for the mill was cut from the land adjoining, owned by Mr. Paul, now the property of his daughter, Mrs. E. L. Floyd, of Shelbyville. Jacob Feaster was the first millwright and built the overshot mill wheel that is fast going to decay.

The mill was operated continuously by various millers until five years ago when it was abandoned. One of the millwrights of recent years was Mose Conrad, father of George Conrad, of Rushville.

People from the lower half of Orange township patronized this mill for years and are more or less familiar with its history.

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WESTPORT - The town has had no saloon since 1881. At that time the owners of the three saloons had made a deal with the owners of the two drug stores selling whiskey by the quart that they would close their saloons if the drug stores would agree never to sell liquor again. This was done. Soon afterwards, a man had several barrels of liquor and kegs of beer shipped into town. To his surprise, he was met by a group of about 25 women who informed him if he did 't ship the goods out of town on the next train, they would split open the barrels and kegs. He quickly collected his merchandise and left town.

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THE EDITOR, OFFICERS, DIRECTORS AND TRUSTEES  
WANT TO WISH  
EACH AND EVERYONE  
A VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS  
AND  
HAPPY NEW YEAR

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APPLICATION OF MEMBERSHIP  
HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF DECATUR COUNTY, INC.

Annual dues are \$2.00 per member. Send to: Historical Society of Decatur Co., P.O. Box 163, Greensburg, IN 47240

☐ Renewal Membership ☐ New Membership ☐ Gift Membership

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

IF GIFT:

From \_\_\_\_\_

Memorial Contributions may be sent to the same address.

In Memory of \_\_\_\_\_

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SOCIETY'S OFFICERS

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## THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF DECATUR COUNTY

Vol. 4, No. 98

Greensburg, Indiana

April, 1984

PRESIDENT'S SAY SO - I sincerely hope you are as excited about the history book project as those who are working on it. I know you are planning to write your family history, and help the project along when you can. It does make our 25th Anniversary year seem even more special since we are doing, in a big way, what we do best, i.e. promote interest in and preserve our history.

Although we have been blessed with so many members who are willing to spend time on behalf of the Society, this month special attention should focus on three people: Doris & Earl Vanderbur who have put all the inventory of the museum on a computer; and James Gaynor who has written a truly superb history of the Society. How lucky we are to have such hard workers! Another person who is vitally interested in our museum has donated money for new wallpaper to be put on the ceiling in the entrance hall. This should be done very soon. The trustees of the Museum have been working hard and at the April meeting we will hear what they have accomplished.

The following persons have volunteered to be chairmen for up-coming meetings: July, 1984-Hanna Brown, Martha Samuels, and Maxine Clemons; October, 1984 - Franklin Corya; January, 1985-Bob Conwell and Allan Beall; April, 1985-Morgan Miers. And now, let's all look forward to the great 25th Anniversary program Anna Paul Lowe and Jane Keith have for us on April 14th.

\* \* \*

MY FATHER'S PEOPLE, Vol. I, by Becky Hardin, has been given Nov. 22, 1983, compliments of the author. Family names mentioned in this book are: Donnel, McClellan, Galloway, Lemon, Crane, McGowan, Magie Romine. Sent by State Library Genealogy Div. See Carnegie Library Genealogy shelf.

OCCASION: Twenty-fifth Annual Dinner Meeting

DATE: Saturday, April 14, 1984, at 6:30 P.M.

PLACE: Presbyterian Church, N.E. corner of Square. Entrance, southside of building.

DINNER: Ladies of the Presbyterian Church. The dinner is \$4.50 each. Please reserve by check only. Send check to: Mrs. Anna Paul Lowe 431 N. Franklin St. Greensburg, IN 47240 Phone: 663-2198 Deadline is April 11th.

PROGRAM: History of Ragtime Music, 1900-1920

This program will be given by Jim and Barbara Atkinson of Greenwood. They will talk about the history of "Ragtime" and play the music of that era. Sounds like a wonderful evening to be present. The year 1984 is the 25th birthday of the Society, so this will, in some respects, be kind of a birthday party. So be sure you do not miss out on the celebrating. Get your reservations in early.

\* \* \*

DECATUR COUNTY HISTORY UPDATE - The Society is sponsoring the publishing of an up-date History Book of Decatur Co. Pres. Pat Smith announced the co-chairmen of the project are Diana Springmier and Rheadawn Metz. All those folks interested in this very worthwhile undertaking please contact one of the above. A brochure has been mailed to all families in the county. All are urgently encouraged to write up their family history, and send it in to become a part of the history of the community.



WINTER MEETING was held Jan. 8 in the Fellowship Hall of the local Baptist Church with numerous members of the Society present. The Viewfinders Camera Club conducted the program which consisted of slides taken by their members concerning various aspects of the Museum in a very favorable light. Members of the audience brought old cameras and pictures for a fine display of photography back when. During the business session, conducted by Pres. Pat Smith, the staff of THE BULLETIN presented William Parker with a copy of all the contributions he has made to THE BULLETIN over the past 25 years. Col. Jim Gaynor volunteered to write a history of the Society for its 25th anniversary. Refreshments were produced by a committee headed up by Lee Lauderdale and Gladys Hellmich. The cake did not disappear this time.

\* \* \*

OPENING DATE FOR MUSEUM - will be the last Sunday in May, the 27th. There will be a special showing of baskets and possibly a surprise. Anyone having old or unusual baskets should call the curator at 663-2905.

Volunteers will be cleaning the Museum in April, anyone wishing to help, please call the curator, Nancy Gilliland. Volunteers are always needed to show visitors around the museum, call Lee Lauderdale if so inclined.

It is planned to have the school children visit in May, help will be needed for this venture.

HOURS MUSEUM OPEN - Friday and Saturday from 1 till 4 P.M. thru September.

\* \* \* \* \*

MUSEUM DONORS during the past winter:

Rebecca Hardin	Jethro A. Meek Estate
Pauline Wheeler	Mrs. Charles D. Wynkoop
David Johnson	Nellie McWilliams Est.
Mrs. Russell Powner	Mr. & Mrs. Van Batterton
Wesley Shumaker	Mrs. Mildred Dietrich
Herb Scheidler	Tree Co. Players
Alden Westhafer	Mrs. Edna Vickrey
Robert Wright	Arthur Ralston
	Elsie Drake Estate

Let us pause in memory of our members who passed away in 1983.

Glen E. Gabhart  
 Mrs. James (Dorothy) Shannon  
 Mrs. Robert (Carol) Meek  
 Wilber Kendall  
 Mrs. Walter (Blanche) Clark  
 Mrs. Edward (Naomi) McCormack  
 Elmer McDermott  
 William B. Baumgartner  
 Ira B. Hamilton  
 Kathryn Taney  
 Mrs. Eric (Attie) Austin  
 Milton M. Swegman  
 Mrs. Hartford (Helen) Sallee  
 Richard G. Wallpe  
 Mrs. Stanley (Ruth) Harroll  
 W. Grant Henderson  
 Mrs. Omer (Helen) Fateley  
 Charles M. Keen  
 Joe Strasburger

\* \* \*

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Mrs. Orville (Clara Swegman) Ponsler, Rushville, IN  
 Miss Nellie Johnson  
 Mrs. Richard (Polly) McCreary  
 Michael Ireland  
 Marjorie Wettering  
 Mrs. Marjorie Farr  
 Mrs. Ben Dyer, San Antonio, TX  
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 Mrs. Marlin (Lorena) Maddux  
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 Mary L. Traylor  
 Mrs. Frieda Hunter, Temple, TX  
 Brenda Alverson  
 Edgar Evans  
 Mrs. Edgar (Elsie) Evans  
 Richard Miller, Sarasota, FL

\* \* \* \* \*

Worland Estate  
 Robert F. Ehrhardt  
 Golda Miller  
 Richard E. Powers  
 Walter Clark  
 Mrs. Joseph Hill  
 Mike Sefton  
 Contel



GRANT HENDERSON - Our Society was saddened by the death of Grant Henderson, November 18, 1983. Grant was active in the formation of the Society and continued his interest until his death. He served at one time as president.

Grant was a truly self made man, a poet, a writer, with several published books, and as authority on all forms of nature.

We never knew Grant and his family before the Historical Society, but soon learned to love them. From then, we set aside one Sunday afternoon a summer to visit with Grant and Edna, the last time, a few weeks before his death. It was time well spent.

The first fall tour of the Decatur County Historical Society was held October 11, 1959 at "Woodlarkland" the beautiful wooded home of the Hendersons, 75 members and friends attending. The business meeting conducted by then president Paul Huber at the guest house by the pond. If I may, I would like to close with a poem by Grant, which might be fitting. Paul inserted it in THE BULLETIN before the tour.

William Parker

OCTOBER

Good morning, October! I thot we'd see  
You right on your toes when the hard maple tree  
Grew yellow and brown and the wind, bearing down  
Cast abroad on the lea  
The leaves that were in summer were green as could be.  
I saw you last night. You were touching the lawn  
With tints of rich color "September's withdrawn"  
You claimed, with a shout, "I have put her to rout!"  
And white as a swan  
Was frost, chilling frost, on the meadows at dawn.  
I'm sure then, October, quite sure that you knew  
That we have been waiting and watching for you!  
And, now you are here, you have ripened the pear,  
And the butternuts. Who  
Was thinking of paw-paws? There mellowing, too!  
Good morning, October! Again I must say  
You're welcome, quite welcome. Ah, Siren, I may  
Be tempted to shun all the work to be done--  
Work? I can't work today!  
You've won me, October! Let's hasten away!

From "Songs of the Woodlark"

\* \* \* \* \*

HISTORY OF THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF DECATUR COUNTY, INC.

By Colonel James K. Gaynor (U. S. Army Retired) with assistance of Mrs. Van P. Batterton.

The Historical Society of Decatur County, Inc. will be twenty-five years old in 1984. It was formed in 1959 as part of the Greensburg centennial observance. Ground work was done by the History Club of Sandcreek High School. Sandcreek High was the successor of Westport High School and its successor was South Decatur High School.

This was not the first historical society in Decatur County, Indiana. Files of the Greensburg Daily News reveal that there was a county historical society in 1916 headed by John F. Russell. This society was revived in 1924 as the Decatur County Historical Society and E. J. Hancock was elected president. He served as president through 1931.



Mrs. Kate Milner Rabb, the famous writer, was a speaker before the Society in 1928, and Governor Harry G. Leslie of Indiana was a speaker in 1931.

A museum was established in December 1928 in the third floor gymnasium of the West End School on North Monfort Street in Greensburg, with the consent of the Greensburg School Board. The last newspaper mention of the society was in August 1951.

Mrs. D. W. Weaver was president of the society in 1931, and Mr. Hancock again was elected president in 1943, replacing Elmer C. German, Superintendent of the Greensburg Schools. This time, Mr. Hancock served as president for five years. Judge Raymond B. Rolfes succeeded him as president in 1947, and Charles H. Ewing was president in 1948.

The society ceased to exist perhaps in 1954 and the exhibits in the old museum were returned or sold as door prizes for the school historical contest. The West End School was razed to make way for the Billings Elementary School.

Twenty-five years ago a group of eleven persons met at the home of the late William L. Woodfill, Greensburg attorney, to plan the present society. The first meeting of the Historical Society was held in March 1959 in the Greensburg City Hall.

The late Paul H. Huber, a Purdue University graduate who served as Decatur County Surveyor and Highway Superintendent from 1935 through 1944, was elected first president of the Historical Society and continued through 1962.

Other officers elected were Mrs. E. A. Porter, wife of a prominent Westport physician, vice-president; Mrs. Betty Woodfill, in whose home the planning meeting was held, secretary; and J. Elwin Gibson, teacher in the Burney School, treasurer.

Mr. Huber also served as editor of the Bulletin of the Historical Society of Decatur County for eighteen years. He resigned, and was succeeded by Van P. Batterton. Mr. Batterton continues to edit the Bulletin. The first issue of the Bulletin was dated May 26, 1959. The ninety-fourth issue was dated January 1984.

The initial scheme of the Historical Society was to hold monthly meeting with an annual dinner meeting. This was abandoned in 1960 in favor of the present practice of four meetings including the annual dinner meeting and the fall tour.

In June 1959, when charter membership was closed, there were 205 members. By the beginning of 1984, the membership included over 600 people in 27 states and one foreign country, Dr. Joel Newman of Israel.

The Historical Society was incorporated in December 1969, and the annual dues, originally fixed at One Dollar a year, were increased to Two Dollars in 1975. A life membership of \$100 per person was added in 1983.

Mr. Huber, who died May 11, 1981, was succeeded as president by the late Earl H. Jarrard, Greensburg attorney. Other presidents have been Loren Garner, 1964; John E. Parker, 1965 and 1966; Grant Henderson, 1967 and 1968; Forest McCardle, 1969-1971; Dale G. Myers, 1972-1975; Van P. Batterton, 1976-1978; Merritt C. Thornburg, 1979-1982; and Mrs. James (Patricia) Smith, since 1983.



In 1960, the number of officers was increased to include a first and second vice-president, and a recording secretary and a corresponding secretary.

More than forty people have served as officers of the Historical Society, including Miss Alpha Thackery, who was treasurer for ten years, and Miss Helen Bussell, who was recording secretary for eight years.

The Historical Society has heard many prominent speakers, including Congressman Lee H. Hamilton of Columbus, Indiana in 1972.

A museum was opened in the K. of P. Building over the Koffee Kup Restaurant in October 1977, largely through the generosity of Mrs. Carl J. Becker of Cincinnati, who had been Miss Margaret Donnell and who attended Decatur County schools. Mrs. Charles E. (Nancy) Gilliland became curator of the museum.

On April 22, 1978, John J. Olinger became the 1,000th visitor to the museum,

The museum is partly maintained by the generosity of Mrs. Vessie Riley, widow of E. T. Riley, M.D., who willed the Historical Society money which, when settled, amounted to over \$3,000.

In November 1981, an anonymous donor gave the Historical Society the Shannon-Lathrop House at 222 North Franklin Street in Greensburg, which had been built in 1829 and, before her death in 1983, had been occupied by Mrs. James L. (Dorothy) Shannon, who had been prominent in the Historical Society.

The anonymous donor's total gift was \$50,000, including the purchase price and restoration of the building. A museum was opened in March 1982 after a dinner for the workmen.

The museum has been open two afternoons a week during the four Summer months (June through September) and on Sunday once a month until winter. It is open to special groups at other times.

School children in the county have seen the museum, officials of the museum setting aside days in which schools may bring their fourth grade classes to the museum with many retired teachers acting as guides. Concentration has been made on the fourth grades while studying Indiana history.

The Historical Society has sponsored four major projects in its twenty-five years, and a fifth now is in progress.

The Historical Society was able to have three structures placed on the National Register of Historic Landmarks, so that they cannot be destroyed without much difficulty. They, and the dates of placing on the register, are the Decatur County Court House, with its world-famous tree on the court house tower (April 27, 1973), the K. of P. Theatre and Lodge Building (March 28, 1978), and a covered bridge east of Westport (January 25, 1982).

Each member of the Historical Society receives a copy of the Bulletin of the Historical Society of Decatur County four times a year. For many years, the Bulletin was printed by Mrs. J. Harvey (Pauline) Wheeler who had taken over the Lambert Abstract business. Beginning



in April 1982, the Bulletin has been printed for the Historical Society by the Delta Faucet Company as a community service.

In 1915, Lewis A Harding was prosecuting attorney at Greensburg and he edited a 1216 page History of Decatur County, Indiana. In 1971, the Historical Society had the Harding history reprinted, and sold 150 copies, making \$350 on the sale of these reprints and gaining thirty new members of the Historical Society.

Then in 1976, the Historical Society had the 1882 Decatur County Atlas reprinted and sold 183 copies during the eight-year period that the Atlas was available. This was a bicentennial project and the profits were used to restore the covered bridge east of Westport which had been damaged by a flood when the railroad reservoir dam broke. The Historical Society donated copies of the Atlas to the three middle schools in the county.

So in the first twenty-five years, the Historical Society had the 1915 history reprinted, it had the 1882 Atlas reprinted, it had the covered bridge east of Westport restored, and it opened the museum which, in 1984, was in its seventh year.

The fifth project of the Historical Society, now in progress, is to sponsor the updating of the History of Decatur County since 1915. President Pat Smith of the Historical Society announced that a Texas firm will print the history and the chairpersons are Mrs. Gordon (Diana) Springmier and Mrs. Robert (Rheadawn) Metz. This project will not profit anyone in the county.

Through the years, the Historical Society and the museum have had many supporters and could not have succeeded without the help of many people, including Mrs. Van (Vivian) Batterton, who also previously was corresponding secretary of the Historical Society for four years; Mrs. Leonilla Lauderdale, who was corresponding secretary of the Historical Society for six years and who has acted as hostess of the museum almost twice weekly and who contacted the volunteer guides for the museum; Miss Martha Samuels, who was librarian in Decatur County for many years; and Miss Milicent Huber, who taught school for many years and refurbished one room of the museum and hallway for the children. Mr. and Mrs. Raymond Carr have refinished many items for the museum.

Many special exhibits at the museum have involved many members of the Historical Society. Many people have graciously loaned their historic priceless family possessions for special showings.

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#### MORE OF OSCAR MILLER'S MEMOIRS

Sometimes we would indulge ourselves in studying the habits and the intricate secrets of the doodle bug which gave evidence of existence in a small hole in the ground usually along a path or stretch of hard surfaced ground. The doodle bug was a very small bug that could drill a hole in very hard ground. John had imparted to me his knowledge of this very interesting doodle bug. He said that this bug was very fond of listening to the human voice. All that was necessary to arrest the attention of this cunning little doodle bug was to sing out in a gentle persuasive voice, "doodle, doodle, doodle." This feat of calling this nice little bug was to get down on the ground full lengths of our stomachs and stretch out full length on the ground and repeat the doodle doodle song right over the hole where the doodle bug had drilled



his small hole in the hard surface of clay. In most instances the bug had thrown out quit a good quantity of drillings plied up around the hole where he had laboriously drilled a hole. Sometimes Mr. Doodle Bug was a hard customer to coax out of his hole, and it sometimes took a good deal of patience in singing the doodle bug song, but with great persuasion and persistance we would at last be rewarded by the doodle bug making his appearance to our great delight. He was, afterall, a very small bug generally covered with dust; he had a sort of round turtle shaped back, two small eyes and about six legs and two arms or antenas with which he used in boaring or drilling the hole in which we found him. He must have been very well skilled and proficient in using these two little arms or extentions of his body as he was able to throw up quit a lot of drillings all around the top of the hole, much after the fashion of the craw-fish chimneys around the holes made by the craw-fish. Now as neither of us was versed in the science of entomology we were unable to clasify this interesting and intelligent doodle bug. He must have had ears as he seemed to be responsive and appreciative of the gentle song of the human voice. He had no wings that we were able to discover, so we clasified him as an insect belonging to the general and extensive family of bugs. He was just a bug. Sometimes we would take a small straw and brush this intelligent bug quite a distance from his hole and immediately he would scramble back in the direction of the hole which he had so laborously drilled, and on reaching his hole again he would hastily make his hurried exit. This showed to us that he was endowed with the natural instinct common to all bugs, bees and other insects known to the general insect world.

Having spent much time in studying some of the peculiarities of the doodle bug, we turned some of our attention to the study of the very industrious but rather offensive occupation of the tumble-bug. He was a large and a very black bug, and about the size of the bumble-bee. This tumble-bug was black and shiny, as if his back had been polished, and in company with a partner were mutually engaged in rolling large round balls about one half inch in diameter constructed from the dung of cattle or horses. These bugs seemed to much prefer the dung from horses, than that produced by the bovine family of animals.

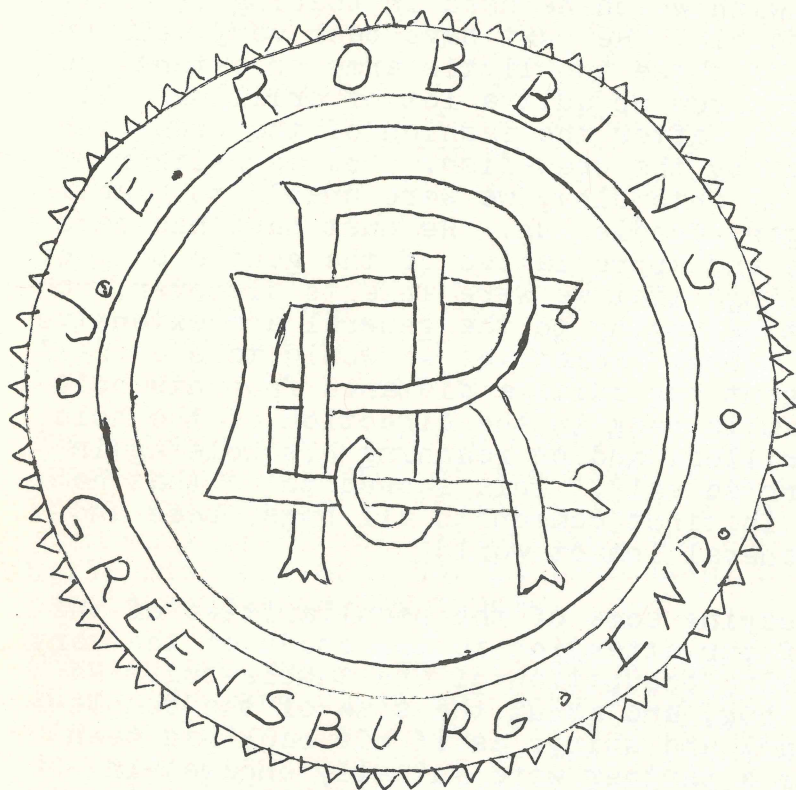
These round balls which these big black bugs so much delighted to tumble about were to all appearances perfect spheres and geometrically constructed. Upon further observation we found that within or near the center of these globular balls was deposited a small round egg that, in due season, would hatch out and produce another bug which would eventually go into the same business of tumble-bug occupation, that his very intelligent and industrious progenators had been engaged in for many generations. While we were not qualified to pass judgment on the lives and useful or unuseful occupations of the doodle bug or the family of tumble-bugs, we were unable to figure out just why they should exist at all. They appeared to us to be of no special use to man or beast so we just called them ordinary bugs and let it go at that. We only observed them for our own amusement and consequently gained but very little from a scientific standpoint. Sometimes we would take a stick and disturb the bugs by displacing the ball on which the two black tumble-bugs were so dilligently rolling about, and cast it some distance from the direction in which they were rolling it. This seemed to momentarily disrupt their procedure. However it would be for only a moment. The two bugs would soon find their dislocated ball and set about rolling it as if nothing had happened. We found that thes bugs were



endowed with an intuitive perception or sensitive animal instinct, common to all animals and insects through-out the world. It was no difference at what distance the little round ball was displaced, they could find it with no trouble whatever. The only lessons that we observed and acquired was the knowledge that this instinct is universally inherent in all life except in man, who has but little.

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### J. E. ROBBINS



Among the excellent pictures, of items in our museum, shown at our last meeting, by the local camera club, was a glass bottle, with the name J. E. ROBBINS etched in a circle in the glass and the initials JER inside the circle. This is a bottle used by John E. Robbins to deliver his Jersey milk from his dairy farm, one mile south of Greensburg to town, in the 1890s to 1910s.

Of the farmers and stockman, from over our county, few have gained more prominence than John E. Robbins. On a trip to the Isle of Jersey, off the English Coast, in 1896, he purchased ten head of the best Jersey cattle he could procure. With this as a beginning he made several

more trips to the Jersey Isles bringing back the finest bloodlines obtainable.

From 1896 to 1910 he bred, sold and exhibited Jersey cattle, and was the only man, at least up to that time, who sold a Jersey Bull for the enormous sum of \$10,000.

In 1911 he began the breeding of Hampshire hogs. This business seems to have been a success from the start, and by 1914, he was selling choice sows and boars, all over the country and exhibiting his best animals at all the midwestern state fairs and the International.

Mr. Robbins carried his livestock business along with his Saltone enterprise, which he organized in 1911. Saltone was a powder formulated to kill worms in livestock and to tone up the animals physically.

Those operations were carried on at his farm one mile south of Greensburg on the Sandcreek Pike where he had built a large one story building which is still standing. He employed, at times, as many as forty men with sales of over \$80,000 in 1914. Mr. Robbins advertised his product with full page ads in all the foremost farm and livestock periodicals and made much use of testimonials. He credited much success of his livestock business to generous use of his Saltone powder.



Mr. Robbins lived on a farm one mile south of Greensburg, which is a part of the original Robbins homestead, in a fine brick home built by his father in 1868. As a lover of beautiful trees, I remember a walnut grove along the road south of the house. A part of the lily pond is still visible. These trees were sold to the Government in World War I to be used for gun stocks. Uncle Jim Fleming (no relation) told me forty years ago, he grubbed those trees out, in order to save the bual in the stumps and roots, and delivered them to the railroad yards, two per day. I never pass there, but I still miss them. John E's brother, Frank, lived on the adjoining farm to the north in another brick home. William and Richard Fogg own and live in these homes now.

William Parker

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#### ORPHANS FROM NEW YORK (excerpts)

"Homeless children from the streets and from orphanages find new homes with midwest families."

The news stories could have been written this year, but the datelines first appeared in 1853. A babylift more than a hundred years ago? Hardly, but the parallel with the present day influx of orphans from Vietnam is too close to ignore. Over a period of about 75 years, almost 100,000 children from New York City were relocated in homes throughout the eastern half of the United States. Between 1853 and 1864, Indiana became a haven for 1,326, the largest number placed in a single state. Between 1865 and 1874, another 1,484 children were placed in Indiana.

In the mid-nineteenth century, New York City was well on the way to becoming a world center of commerce and industry. It was the port of entry for a great wave of immigrants. Overcrowding, poverty, crime and drunkenness spawned massive social problems, with children the chief victims. Some of the orphaned or homeless children were placed in the few orphan asylums, many were sheltered in the almshouse or "poor farm" along with the sick, the handicapped, the senile and the insane. At a time when the population was 500,000, police estimated that 10,000 homeless children roamed the streets and begged or stole for food.

By contrast, in the midwest children were an asset to the community. Every pair of hands was wanted, and farms could support big families.

In 1853, a young New York minister and some like-minded reformers organized the New York Children's Aid Society to bring the two resources--children and families who wanted them--together.

When they published their plans, the response was astounding. Children crowded into the offices; they came by themselves or were brought by the police, by concerned adults or even by parents who wanted something better than the New York slums for their children.

The procedure that evolved during the first years was followed for well over half a century.

Either through its agents or by direct request, the society learned about a town interested in taking in children. It set up a committee of local citizens to screen applicants and to arrange for the arrival



and display of the children. Notices in newspapers and announcements in churches usually brought a crowd to the station to meet the "orphan train." A public meeting was held at which the agent explained the aims of the society and gave some of the history of the children. Then the selections were made by those judged suitable to offer homes to them.

Foster families were required to provide a Christian home, schooling and wages for older children who could work on farms or in industry. Months later, when the agent of the society came back to check on them, if either the family or the child seemed dissatisfied, a new home was sought for the child. This apparently happened rarely, as society files reveal many letters of gratitude.

However, an early Indiana state superintendent of welfare describes the process differently. His description calls to mind the mixed response usually accorded refugee movements;

"Dependent children of New York City were crowded into stock cars and shipped west...the children herded like cattle on an auction block while citizens gathered to select those they were willing to take into their homes."

One wonders what became of the children in their new homes. The records of the society were sketchy at first, and later, when better records were kept, they were not open to the public. The fate of a number of the Indiana children is known, however.

By the early part of the 20th century, the orphan trains became fewer and by the twenties, other means were found for caring for the needy and dependent. New state laws provided widow's pensions, medical insurance, compulsory education and curbs on child labor. The society turned its goals toward finding remedies to keep troubled families together.

One writer observed that "not since the tragic Children's Crusade in the Middle Ages have so many children been moved over such vast distances."

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#### THE FOX CHASE

The grand "Fox Drive" which took place in the vicinity of Letts Corner, on last Saturday, is one long to be remembered by all who participated in the exciting chase. As we were there and had an opportunity of witnessing the sport, we will endeavor to give a faint description of the proceedings.

Saturday morning dawned with gloomy prospects for a fair day, and all seemed heavy of heart, for the dreams of the sport they were expecting to realize, seemed to be swallowed up in the rain, hail, sleet, and snow, that came in the forenoon. By nine o'clock the storm abated, and the distant boom of anvils at the "Corner" broke the stillness of the morning speaking in tones of thunder to the despairing "commanders" to meet in solemn council to determine upon some mode of attack. About half past twelve o'clock some five or six hundred men and boys were assembled at different points ready to be formed in line under the command of Generals Hunter, Fowler, Thompson, E. F. Evans, Stout and Lett, and others who were equally as brave as the above named gentleman.



By two o'clock the lines were formed, the signal to advance was give, and away the grand army of FOX DRIVERS marched through fields and forest. over hills and hollows, yelling like so many Indians, stepping to the time of sweet music discoursed by a choice band, (which the "managers" announced in their flaming posters would be in attendance,) consisting of a dum bull, one brass horn, and a few old horse fiddles. After a march of about one hour the mighty force came to the grand center; where the war of extermination was to take place upon poor Reynards. the drivers mounted the fence, and eagerly scanned the level plain before them. (Said plain being a forty acre field) expecting to see no less than one dozen foxes hemmed in. Those on the South line cast their eyes on the opposite side of the field, expecting every moment to see the GAME, rush pell-mell in all directions. There he comes! exclaims one. Then arose a yell which was enough to deafen one. We cast our eyes to the North and lo! there came across the field at almost lightening speed, not a fox but one of the canine species of the HOUND family, frightened nigh unto death. Was this all we had surrounded? Alas! yes. Reader imagine the feelings of those renowned "managers" of the grand hunt. No pen can portray, or tounge tell their disappointed look. The scene was one fit for an article. "Last but not least" the foot race was eagerly looked for. A purse of five dollars was the amount advertised to be given to the winner. But the valiant crowd had only enough nickles and two cent pieces to swell the sum to two dollars. The result was made known to the crowd, and the contestants who were willing to run for two fifths of the required amount were called for. Immediately there stepped forward yiz. J. S. Owen, Thos. Nelson, and Jarred Thompson, who stripped themselves of all wearing apparel except shirt and pants. The distance run was fifty rods, the money placed at one end of the track, and the first in took the cash. All three arranged themselves in order, and got a fair start, Nelson and Thompson doing their utmost, going neck and neck leaving Owen some few yards behind. But their bad training and short wind soon began to tell. Owen who started out on a moderate trot was soon preceived to be rapidly gaining ground. At last with one enormous leap and a redoubling of speed soon passed the other two leaving them far in the rear, secured the prize and marched off the victor. Thus ended the memorable day.

-From THE GREENSBURG STANDARD, Thursday, April 17, 1873-

---

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THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF DECATUR COUNTY

Vol. 4, No. 99

Greensburg, Indiana

July 1984

PRESIDENT'S SAY SO:- We cannot ever praise Nancy Gilliland enough for all she has done during her years as curator of our museum. Nancy, as she has had the curator's job since the museum began, thought someone else should have the opportunity. We are lucky to have Jackie Mendenhall, as our new curator, and I am sure you will help her in all the ways you helped Nancy. Jackie will be happy to hear your ideas.

The opening of the museum was Sunday, May 27, and it was a grand opening indeed. There were baskets of every kind displayed, (about 55 baskets that I counted). There were fish baskets, knitting, fireplace or kindling baskets, egg, bread, clothing, Indian baskets and grain baskets, made out of wicker, split white oak, grape vine, willow, grass, bamboo, an Oriole nest basket, a shell basket and glass baskets. It was marvelous! John Follmer, from near Osgood, brought up three baskets made by a neighbor of his in either 1926 or 1927.

The school children from the fourth grades at St. Mary's, Rosemund, Billings, and Washington Schools plus the Girl and Boy scouts have taken tours of the museum in May. It is a great experience to read the delightful letters from these students after they have been through the museum.

Lois Laskowski has planted an herb garden in the back yard of the museum and I saw Thyme, Lemon Balm, Oregano, Chives, and Borage, plus others I couldn't identify. This is an excellent addition to the museum and our thanks to Lois for this idea and for her work.

Now we are looking forward to the July meeting. I have been thinking about what children's books to take for sharing with everyone. See you there!

OCCASION: Summer meeting of the Historical Society.

DATE: Sunday, July 8, 1984 at 2:00 P.M.

PLACE: Baptist Church, West Washington St. Greensburg.

PROGRAM: Remembrances of Children's Literature.

The committee composed of Hannah Brown, Martha Samuels, and Maxine Clemons will take us back to the literature we read in our childhood days. Children's books and magazines will be on display, and a program will be presented by local story tellers. See the article in this issue about children's books. The committee asks each person to share the name of a special book from your younger days, and to please bring examples of books or magazines for children of earlier. Be sure to come too.

\* \* \* \*

Museum Hours: - New summer hours are Friday & Sunday 2-4 P.M. July 4th will be open 10:00 - Noon. Volunteers are needed for the operation of museum, call 663-5479.

\* \* \* \*

TRIP to the museum to see the new permanent collection of primitives donated by Dr. Dale Dickson are being displayed in the "carriage" house.

\* \* \* \*

DEADLINE for ordering new Decatur County History book is August 1st. Remember you must purchase them before above date, or the opportunity is lost forever. Send your check to P.O. Box 412.



WELCOME NEW MEMBERS -

Dr. James C. Miller  
 Mrs. James (Jinx) Miller  
 Mrs. Richard (Peg) Miller  
 Joseph Dunnuck  
 Paul K. Vanderbur  
 Mrs. Paul (Sue) Vanderbur  
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 Mrs. Robert (Rheadawn) Metz  
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 Doris Shafer, Columbus, IN.  
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 Mrs. John (Judith) Curd  
 June Stewart Roberts, Princeton, NJ.  
 Ruth Boring  
 James Harper, Brownsburg, IN.  
 Mrs. Cora Marie Crawley  
 Dale W. Davis  
 Mrs. Dale (Martha) Davis  
 Sharon Pratt, Beech Grove, IN.  
 Sutherland McCoy  
 Mrs. Sutherland (Mary Ruth) McCoy

\* \* \* \*

TWENTY-FIFTH BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION of the Decatur County Historical Society took place at the Presbyterian Church the evening of April 14 with some 160 members taking part. After a fine meal, acting chef Allan Beall wheeled in a truly wonderful looking birthday cake to the enjoyment of all present. During the business session all of the officers were re-elected except Diana Swegman who moved to corresponding secretary and Peg Miller took over as recording secretary. It was announced that Nancy Gilliland wished to resign as curator of the museum, this is quite a loss as Nancy has been fine in the position. Since this meeting, Jackie Mendenhall has taken over as curator, we hope she will receive the utmost cooperation of the membership. The

DONORS TO THE LOCAL MUSEUM:

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 Lee Lauderdale  
 Milicent Huber  
 Albert Miller  
 Carl Merkel  
 Lois Laskowski (Herb Garden)  
 Porter-Oliger-Pearson Funeral Home  
 Edgar Scheidler

\* \* \* \*

CLINTON TOWNSHIP SCHOOL -

Originally the township had four school districts with one or two room brick school houses in each district. In 1906, these were abandoned and all pupils transported to the school at Sandusky. This was under the trusteeship of John Spilman. In 1908 the school building burned, and the present school house was completed in the autumn of 1910. This was the only school in the township so it was called the first consolidated school in the state. However, the school had been consolidated two or three years prior to 1910.

\* \* \* \*

\$\$\$\$\$ We pay for the mistakes of our ancestors, and it seems only fair that they should leave us the money to pay with. \$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$



birthday program was ragtime music played by Jim and Barbara Atkinson on two pianos. The music had everyone ready to get up and dance, certainly was enjoyed by all. They also gave the history of the ragtime music they played. The Society wishes to thank the committee of Anna Paul Lowe and Jane Keith for the fine evening. Linda (Keith) Senft made the table decorations and name tags, we thank her. Everyone appreciated a great meeting.

\* \* \* \* \*

CHILDREN'S LITERATURE -- NINETH CENTURY  
by  
Hannah Brown

We all share a common remembrance of childhood books and stories with people who grew up at the same time with us. This is not true today because with the thousands of new books published each year for children, it is impossible for all children to read all of the same books. However, within the past century when we, our parents and grandparents were children there were not so many books available and children usually read only those in their homes or shared with their friends.

Therefore, to be able to read books and hear stories that your parents and grandparents grew up with is another insight into your ancestors.

Librarians and teachers say that children's literature is (1) written especially for children, (2) "good" literature and (3) loved by children. The most important is that it be loved by children. For example, the beloved Robinson Crusoe was written for adults and the beloved Nancy Drew series is not considered "good" literature by anyone (neither were the beloved dime novels of the last century).

Before the nineteenth century, children were considered to be little adults and nobody had heard of teenagers. Children were a part of the work force in factories, farms and households. Marriage usually occurred during the teens. Only a few books were written just for children and they were heavy on religious emphasis including the New England Primer. That primer, used for nearly a century was for the purpose of teaching children to read the Bible and to lead a religious life according to the Puritans. A well-read book from England, The Renowned History of Little Goody Two-shoes by Oliver Goldsmith championed scholarship and free enterprise. Also from England came books published by John Newbery. Charles Perrault and Jean de la Fontaine in France contributed books of fairy tales, legends and fables.

Beginning with the Revolutionary War period, the emphasis in books was national and moralistic. The goals of schools were to prepare students to become the educated electorate capable of speaking in public, reading about politics and religion, and knowing the correct usage and spelling of the English language. Girls began to go to school but were not taken too seriously, so most of the books were written for boys and featured boy characters. Girls in books were shown in their proper place--in the home.

Three classics, Robinson Crusoe, Pilgrim's Progress, and Guliver's Travels, have survived as favorites. Other books popular with children were Moral Sketches by Hannah More which included "The Shephard of Salisbury", The History of Sanford and Merton by Thomas Day and the famous biography of George Washington by Parson Weems.



During this period, Peter Parley in 1827 began the publication of the weekly Youth's Companion which ran for over a century. It presented serials, adventure stories, moral tales, informational articles and writings by children as well as by famous authors. The Companion was a popular item among folks out here in what was considered the west.

The landmark poem written in 1822 was America's "A Visit from St. Nicholas" by Clement Moore.

Before and after the Civil War, the emphasis in education was for intelligent citizenship with more attempts to make books for children interesting. Contemporary social issues such as slavery, the war, industrialization or the beginnings of the woman's movement were ignored for the children in most trade books and text books.

A literary landmark during this time was the beginning, in 1872, of publication of the St. Nicholas magazine which was first started by Mary Mapes Dodge, the author of Hans Brinker. It never reached even one-fifth of the circulation of Youth's Companion but because she wanted good literature to present to young people, the contributors were the best writers of the time. Serialized in the magazine were: Eggleston's Hoosier Schoolboy, Twain's Tom Sawyer Abroad, Alcott's Jo's Boys and Kipling's Jungle Books. Illustrations were from famous children's illustrators such as Howard Pyle, Arthur Rackham and Norman Rockwell. Teenagers who contributed articles were Edna St. Vincent Millay, Cornelia Otis Skinner and Rachel Field.

The next period of History until the First World War had an emphasis on reading as a cultural asset. In 1894, a group of educators, the Committee of Ten on Secondary Schools, made a report which was very influential on American education, much like the recent enquiries into academic excellence. As a result of the 1894 report, teachers were made to feel responsible for getting high school students to pass college entrance exams and ignored needs of the majority of non-college bound children. This did not mean that children were necessarily encouraged to enjoy reading. However inexpensive classics were almost the entire English curriculum. Many people have some of these small volumes of Shakespeare and other famous authors in their home libraries left over from some ancestor's first venture into high school.

This period has been called a golden era of children's literature because publication was prolific. Series and adventure stories in inexpensive bindings and dime novels put books into many children's hands at Christmas time. Examples of series were Finley's pious Elsie Dinsmore, and Coolidge's Katy. McGuffey's Eclectic Readers were used. They presented writings for the purpose of developing cultural citizens continuing to ignore pertinent social issues and emphasizing the attitudes of the American Dream. The American Dream was depicted most graphically by Horatio Alger in books such as Ragged Dick, or, Street Life in New York. Highlighting this period were classics such as Little Women, Tom Sawyer, Huckleberry Finn and Treasure Island and other books by their famous authors. Research into legends and tales by the Grimm brothers, Andersen and others brought publication of the great stories we tell today such as "Snow White" and "The Three Bears", often beautifully illustrated. Series popular late in this era were Johnston's Little Colonel and Montgomery's Anne of Green Gables. George Alfred Henty wrote more than eighty books about adventurous youngsters all over the world set in many periods of history. Twain's Tom and Huck were



examples of characters from books known as "bad boy books" started by Thomas Bailey Aldridge's Story of a Bad Boy.

An interesting sidelight about Hucklebery Finn is that it was censored almost as soon as it hit the shelves of the Concord Massachusetts library because it was "trash, vicious and unfit...". It is censored today for racial reasons.

The phenomenon of the dime novel between the 1860's and the turn of the century was fed by the interest in tales of the wild west, detectives and American revolutionary heroes. They were usually fifty pages measuring eight-and-one-half by five inches with one lurid illustration. Ned Buntline who popularized Buffalo Bill was one of the best known authors. Needless to say, these popular publications were really frowned on by teachers and librarians.

Beatrix Potter's delightfully illustrated small books about the trials and tribulations of animals of Edwardian England started with The Tale of Peter Rabbit in 1901.

In 1942 with the publication of Maureen Daly's Seventeenth Summer, there was a definite break between books written specially for children and those for young adults. Daly's book was the first young adult novel. This trend continues, highlighted by the first young adult realistic problem novel, S.E. Hinton's The Outsiders in 1967.

Look among your family treasures for old children's books. They were often given as gifts and cherished by the recipients.

\* \* \* \* \*

The Committee preparing our new Decatur County History, asked if I would write an article on the "Works Progress Administration" better known as the W.P.A., in 500 words or less. I did not think justice could be done to the subject, but with help from Mr. Lawrence Hendrickson of Route 4, and Mr. Earl Robbins of Greensburg, we came up with the following: During the "Great Depression" of the 1930's, Congress established two programs to provide employment for the unemployed. The first enacted in 1933, known as the Civilian Conservation Corporation, commonly called the C.C.C. to provide employment for eligible young men between the ages of 18 and 25, in various projects aimed at conserving, or improving the countrys natural resources, as reforestation, soil erosion, flood control, fire prevention, road building, park and recreation area improvement. The only C.C.C. project I recall in our county, was one summer a truck load of 20-25 boys, from a camp near North Vernon was brought up, daily, to the Harris City Quarry to help pulverize limestone to apply to the farmers fields.

The other program enacted in 1935, with no age restriction, was known as the "Works Progress Administration, or the W.P.A. The purpose of the W.P.A. was quite similar to the C.C.C., to get the Federal Government into a system of work relief and of furnishing jobs to the unemployed. These jobs mostly of a simple nature. 85% of the W.P.A. budget was to go for wages.

In 1941, Congress granted much less money than President Roosevelt asked for, so the W.P.A. began to cut back its workers. It continued to hold on until 1942. It lasted for 7½ years. The overall cost of the project estimated 11 billion. There is no doubt it did much good.



The activities in Greensburg and Decatur County were mostly similar, street, alley, and road work, drainage problems, tree cutting, pond building, clean and straightening stream beds, cemetery work.

Two of the larger pond projects being the Wheeler pond East of Letts and the Dr. Morrison pond at Tarkeo, many smaller ponds were also built. One many of us might recall, on the Logan farm where Muddy Fork Creek crosses present St. Road 46. These small ponds wash out in a few years.

In an interview with Earl Robbins of Greensburg, who worked on the W.P.A., he says the pay was 50¢ per hour and they were allowed 30 hours per week. \$15.00 would buy a lot of groceries in the 1930's. He mentioned a community wood lot in Greensburg, some of the logs and limbs cut along the roads were hauled to the wood lot, cut up and stacked. When a needy family was short of fuel, they could call in and a load would be delivered to them. He mentions working on many streets and alleys, tearing out the interurban tracks along Main Street and digging a 14 foot ditch to drain the basement of the City Hall building.

Since the object of these projects was to furnish the maximum number of jobs, the work was done by hand labor whenever possible.

Last but not least, let us not forget the manufacture of hundreds of W.P.A. toilets. These toilets were made in the rear of the Roy Montgomery garage, on West Main St. in Greensburg. These were erected all over the county. Many are still visible today.

Submitted by:

William Parker

\* \* \* \* \*

EDITOR'S NOTE: Colonel Jim Gaynor, who wrote a history of our Society which appeared in the April 1984 issue of the Bulletin, said he received several telephone calls correcting him in one detail. The article said the Museum was begun through the generosity of the widow of E.T. Riley, M.D. Actually it was the joint will of Mrs. Lottie Riley (Dr. Riley's widow) and Miss Vessie Riley (the sister of Dr. Riley). This error is regretted.

\* \* \* \* \*

Excerpts from Walter Clark Remembers, an Interview.

#### RAILROAD

My great grandfather, Isaac Doles, supervises the running of the railroad to Smith's Crossing. He was the contractor. It went through New Point in about 1854 and it followed the old Indian Trail. The railroad came from Lawrenceburg to Smith's Crossing. They then backed the train to Batesville and turned the engine around there. They fired the engines with wood, and they'd buy a rick of wood for 50¢. There was a wood yard for them at New Point and Smith's Crossing. Then my grandfather, Pleasant Doles, supervised the railroad to Greensburg.

They built the railroad with ox carts, and made the big cut that goes thru Lake McCoy. They hauled that out and made the dam for Lake McCoy.

Grandpa lived up there on the hill and the workers boarded up there



with them. That was East of McCoy's Station. There is a grave yard back up there someplace. I don't know who's buried there because there were no stones.

Len Sands and Billy Thomas ran the depot. Billy was a power operator at McCoy's Station and he went to McCoy's Station on an old hand car. He said going through that, cut the wind from the West and he had to get off and push that car because the wind funneled down there so hard, he couldn't pull it by hand. Coming home the wind pushed him right along though.

When they were making that cut they used the first steam shovel in this part of the country. People would come from all over and gather up on the hill to watch it. It was like going to the South rim of the Grand Canyon.

\* \* \* \* \*

Doddridge Alley an interesting side-light in the life of a historic Decatur County personality. It was said that when the Civil War started he was too old to join the Army, so he made a point of seeing that the families of soldiers did not suffer from want. He is reported to have penned up the livestock which strayed and made an honest effort to find the owner. If no owner could be found, he had the animals butchered and distributed the meat to the needy families. Also, he made a practice each year of reserving a portion of the wool from his flock of sheep which he took to the carding mill at the foot of the hill in Milford and had made into yarn for distribution to the mothers of children who needed clothing. (Decatur County History, Jean Finley)

\* \* \* \* \*

THE HOG MUST GO.....Greensburg is no longer a village. Council last night, by the following vote, passed the ordinance prohibiting hogs running at large, yeas 4, nays 4. There being a tie Mayor Dunn gave the decisive vote for the measure. (Sat. Rev.)

\* \* \* \* \*

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P.O. Box 163 Greensburg, IN. 47240

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THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF DECATUR COUNTY

Vol. 4, No. 100

Greensburg, Indiana

October 1984

OCCASION: Fall Tour of the Historical Society.

DATE: Sunday, Oct. 21, 1984  
1:00 P.M.

PLACE: Tour Bus will leave promptly from the North side of the Court House Square.

PROGRAM: Our neighboring county, Rush, will be the Society's destination for this annual event. The bus will be met in Rushville by Jim Scott, former president of Rush County Historical Society and well known historian of this area. He will conduct the group on a very interesting tour of historical spots of the Rush County environs. This is a special tour devised by Jim, and used to entertain numerous groups coming to Rushville. You, as historians, must not miss this opportunity. Rush County has lots of well preserved history, and Mr. Scott is certainly well versed on the subject. As usual, the fare will be between \$2.50 and \$3.00 depending on the number of voyagers and the distance. This is quite a good deal, no worries just sight-see and enjoy yourself. Please reserve by calling any one of the directors who are listed on the back of the Bulletin. Thank you.

\$      \$      \$      \$

Old Time Apples-Many of the antique apple varieties that were developed during the late 1700's and early 1800's are now available as dwarf and semi-dwarf trees. These apples have been preserved by historical groups and nurseries. Numerous old timers such as Maiden Blush, York Imperial, Golden Russett, Snow, Sheepnose, Northern Spy, and Winter Banana can be purchased in garden centers around the country. (Better Homes and Gardens, 9/84.)

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS -

Charles I. Shook  
William L. Holcomb, Indianapolis  
Mrs. Raymond (Mary Jane) Burkhead  
Mrs. Laura B. Morgan, Eau Gallie, Florida  
Mrs. Oscar (Ida) Lange, Madras, OR.  
Mrs. Dorothy McCreary  
Albert L. Moore  
Mrs. Albert (Diane) Moore  
J.P. Morgan  
Mrs. J.P. (Joan) Morgan  
Jerry Reese  
Mrs. Jerry (Roma) Reese  
George Cann  
Edith King Brown, Mason City, IA.  
Patrick E. Osting  
Mrs. Edwin (Alouise) Kessler  
James C. White, St. Paul, IN.  
Mrs. James (Pauline) White

\$      \$      \$      \$      \$

PRESIDENT'S SAY SO: - I hope you all heard the one minute spots on WTRE that several members recorded in celebration of Greensburg's 125th birthday. The spots were heard six times a day during the 31 days of July. Joe Riddell, General Manager of the station, gave the Society one half of the advertising dollars which came to \$150.00. Please express your thanks to Joe when you see him.

The History book project is coming along on schedule. We owe Mrs. Gordon Springmier and Mrs. Robert Metz our deepest gratitude for the time they have spent on this project.

Mrs. James Mendenhall (Jackie), our curator has been appointed to the Board of Trustees. The curator must have a say so about the museum and know exactly what is planned in terms of repairs, etc.

Mrs. Charles Gilliland (Nancy) who served as our curator for so long with such distinction, and whom we will continue to depend on to advise us, has agreed to serve as special showings advisor.



I request, once again, that there be workshops set up for persons willing to serve as hostesses when the museum is open. There could be one afternoon set aside per month for this. Out of our membership, I know there are some willing to serve. The same ones should not have to serve as hostesses to tour guides every weekend. If you have already volunteered and not been called, or if you are willing to volunteer, please let me know. I will get some workshops set up for Spring opening.

If a repair job or other job at the museum hasn't been completed, perhaps there are some members who would volunteer to help finish it. The trustees work hard but there is a lot to do and we must remember that the museum belongs to all of us.

Life memberships are available and the money will go into the building fund. We must remember that we now have a building to maintain and so we will want to keep the fund in good shape. If you have ideas for building up the fund, let me know.

In another section of the bulletin you will read about the work of the trustees on the museum this summer. A lot of money was spent but it is impossible to have a home without spending money on upkeep. If you haven't seen what has been done, why not stop in on a Friday or Sunday before the museum closes?

You may have noticed that we now have No Smoking signs in the museum. A good idea, but please - can't they be placed where they don't cover a display or part of a display?

The Garden Club wanted to landscape the yard of the museum this year but were told there were other plans. If there ARE other plans, could I, as President, be informed? Unless I am advised of any plans that all the trustees have agreed upon, I will ask the directors to meet with members of the Garden Club.

See you at the Fall tour?

\$     \$     \$     \$     \$     \$     \$     \$     \$

SUMMER MEETING of the Decatur County Historical Society was held at the Baptist Church, July 9th with about 65 of the faithful present. An excellent program entitled, "Remembrances of Children's Literature" was put together by a committee composed of Hannah Brown, Martha Samuels, and Maxine Clemons. Five local folks gave children's stories, and did a fine job of it. Chris Hoak told "The Gingerbread Boy", John Shafer "Three Little Pigs", Maxine Clemons gave a medley of familiar children's poems, Orville Pitts told a story from "The Bears of Blue River", and Mary Lou Rust, dressed to fit, acted out the story of Alice from "The Bear Story". Truly a fine program, nice if more of the membership would take this opportunity to be entertained. Joe Riddell of WTRE presented the Society with a check for \$150.00 for taking part in the one minute salute to Greensburg's 125th birthday. The committee provided appropriate refreshments with Doris Stevenson producing the gingerbread boy cookies.

\$     \$     \$     \$     \$     \$     \$     \$     \$



MUSEUM REPAIR - The expenditure of between \$7,000 and \$8,000 for repair and remodeling of the back end of the museum home was approved by the Society Directors and the Trustees of the Museum. This consisted of: Straighten the foundation; enclosing a back porch; new siding; the addition of plenty of insulation, plus a new entry door in the garage.

Another Museum item - the city of Greensburg donated their old 1929 Dodge Fire Engine to the Museum; will be fine for the Society to use in parades.

\$ \$ \$ \$ \$ \$ \$ \$ \$ \$

Museum Donors during the past three months -

Anna Paul Lowe	Mrs. Richard Morrish	Florine Tillson
Harry Leadbetter, Jr. Est.	Mrs. William Fogg	Jackie
Marijean Espy	Mary Robbins Weston	Mendenhall
Vivian Kanouse	Cleo Renigar	Mrs. Orris Elder
Martha Samuels	Marritt Thornburg, Est.	Mrs. James
Lee Lauderdale	Hilda Hessler	McLaughlin
Lou Hellmich	Mrs. Betty Henry	Doris Readmond
City of Greensburg	Vida Loucks	
Mary Amanda Mitchell (Gutherie)	Decatur County Carnegie Library	

\$ \$ \$ \$ \$ \$ \$ \$ \$ \$

Indiana Game Laws from a 1872 newspaper-The Interval in which the different kinds of game may be killed are as follows: Quail, turkeys, and ruffled grouse from the 15th of October to the 1st of February; wild rabbits and doves from November 1st to February 1st; meadow larks and killdeer from the 1st of October until the 1st of February; wild duck from the 1st of September to the 15th of April; woodcock from the 4th of July to the 1st of February; and wild deer from the 1st of October to the 1st of January; netting quail is forbidden at any time. The fine for violating this law is not less than two or more than twenty dollars or imprisonment in the county jail or both at the discretion of the courts.

This was found in an old book. William Parker

\$ \$ \$ \$ \$ \$ \$ \$ \$ \$

WANTED: Information about letters, diaries and journals written prior to 1900 by Indiana Hoosiers. To be used for private research. Please contact Mrs. Louise B. Dunn, 5323 West Delap Road, Ellettsville, Indiana 47429, or call collect 812-876-2128.

\$ \$ \$ \$ \$ \$ \$ \$ \$ \$

First Court House erected in 1826. Maple trees in park cut down in 1822(?) and a board fence surrounded the park to keep hogs and cows out. At each side was entrance-a style consisting of steps up to a platform four feet high. Shade trees were around the square in front of business houses. About half of the space around the square was covered by residences, many of log. The old jail in the southwest corner of the park was the only building in the park for five years, and torn down in 1858.

\$\$\$\$\$ Life would be infinitely happier if we could only be born at the age of 80 and gradually approach 18. MARK TWAIN \$\$\$



PROPOSED WORK ESTIMATES FOR THE MUSEUM

August 31, 1984

Insulate Attic 8".....	\$ 600.00
Change Thermostat from front room to Apt.....	71.50 (52.00)
Bath Room - New tub & shower combination	
labor and materials.....	500.00
Grass mowings.....	16.00
Treatment of grass 2 times:Al60, weeds and	
fertilize.....	47.26
Additional paint and materials for porch floor	
and east room.....	50.00
TOTAL.....	<u>\$1,284.76</u>

Above is a list of upcoming needs of the Museum building. It is the hope of the Museum Trustees and the Directors of the Society that members will contribute toward these expenses. If you would like to help on any one of these items, please call the treasurer, Marion Lawson at 663-3473.

\$ , \$ \$ \$ \$ \$ \$ \$ \$

\*\*\*POEM\*\*\*

It's an echo from the forests  
From the rippling of the streams  
From the lovers' sweet communion  
In the moonlight's mellow beams  
It's an echo from their cabins  
From a child on Mothers' knee  
It was good for Whitcomb Riley  
It's plenty good for me.

Oh those brave and kindly Hoosiers  
May their kind forever dwell  
In dear old Indiana  
In the land they loved so well  
May we hold on high their standard  
Oh! Their faith in truth and right  
That in times of deep depression  
It shall help us win the fight.

Edna Vickery  
November, 1971

P.S. Happy 91st Birthday, Edna !!

\$ \$ \$ \$ \$ \$ \$ \$ \$ \$  
The citizens of the East and South sides of the square have employed Mr. Dille to sprinkle that part of the city--good idea. Can't we have one around here? A little water on the streets during this dry and dusty weather would give our merchants considerable labor, preserve their goods, and make the atmosphere much more comfortable. (Dec. Republican, June 1860)



THE OLD SETTLERS OF DECATUR COUNTY      by: William Parker

The old settlers of Decatur County will hold their ninth annual reunion at the same old place in Cunningham's Grove two miles north-east of Westport, August 22,23,24 and 25, 1905.

Preparations are being made to make this one of the greatest and grandest ever held in southern Indiana. A well has just been finished on the grounds that will furnish water for 10,000 people daily, also another well that will furnish water for 5,000 head of livestock daily. A large force of men are now at work, building stalls and pens. Zack says he is not going to spare money on time, he's going to have a stunner this year. He has secured a large tent, for the old and feeble to rest in. It will be furnished with cots and rockers. There will be a boy to look after their wants and needs. A large police force will be there day and night to protect the people. Telephone accommodations will be provided. Farmers, bring your stock and poultry. There will be plenty of stalls, pens, and water for all. Privileges are free to all exhibitors. One half fare on all railroads and free admission to the grounds. All moral amusements will be allowed on the grounds.

Every summer, when the corn was laid by and the wheat harvested and in the bin, you would know it would not be long before flyers would appear on trees, in stores and public places over our and surrounding counties, reminding the people that the time was nearing for the annual Zack Boicourt "Old Settlers Reunion".

Preparations have been made on a larger scale than ever before for the entertainment of the thousands who attend. The attendance of less than 300 the first year, 1896, has increased to over 15,000 last year. This seems fantastic when we realize we were still in the horse and buggy age.

The opening day, Tuesday, August 22, was Children's Day and always opened with the Grand Parade. I am indebted to Mrs. Raymond (Mary) Worland for much of this information. She tells me Mr. Boicourt selected her and her twin sister, Martha, to lead the parade followed by the band, fife and drum corps, horses, cattle, ponies, etc. Martha is now Mrs. Paul Turner Jackson. This year Mr. Boicourt invited the children from the Orphan's Home as his guests. Speakers of the day were Rev. Fichter, Rev. A.W.Davis of Greensburg and Rev. J.C. Bringle of Westport.

The Speakers committee was C.I. Ainsworth, James Pavy, C.W.Updike, Londa Wright, Will Meridith, and Samuel Surface. Other committees were Horses-Jacob Black, Cattle-F.D. Armstrong and Sam Sharp, Hogs-Clyde Kitchen and John Owens, Arrangements-W.F. Robbins, General Superintendent-Zack Boicourt. Wednesday was designated as "Temperance Day." This year the committee selected Mrs. Carrie Nation as the headliner. Very few people did not know of Carrie Nation, for her saloon smashing episodes were much publicized over the mid-west. She was arrested many times, paying her fines with fees from her lectures and publications. At one time we had subscribed to the one she called the "Hatchet." My Mother had one of her pins, shaped like a hatchet, which she often wore, and we still have. Thursday, Gov. Will Cumback and Congressman F.M. Griffith will speak and Friday, J. Frank Hanley and others of national fame. (This mostly from the Greensburg Standard, August, 1905.)



The reunion was not new to us, for in the past, we usually attended one day. This year my parents decided to attend on Temperance Day in order to hear Carrie Nation.

So on this morning we arose a little early, fed our horse "Old Billie" a little extra, little did he realize the trip of 30 miles or so that had been planned for him. After breakfast, Mother finished packing the picnic basket, we hitched up the horse, and we were ready to depart. Billie had a little ritual he always performed on the first take off of the day. He just would not stand quiet like a horse should, but when Dad with reins in one hand, the other with a firm grip on a buggy bow, made the final leap for the seat, we were off and running. This lasted for about 100 feet, when Billie realized he was making a mistake, then he went at a slow pace.

We left Greensburg by the Sandcreek Pike, past the beautiful Robbins home on the right and were soon at Turner's Quarry. Taking the turn to the left, we were on the Gaynorsville Road, following the windings of Sandcreek, thru the iron bridge and up the hill past Mt. Pleasant and soon were in Gaynorsville, turning right at the first road, crossing Sandcreek again on another iron bridge and left at the first road, we eventually passed the center of population farm and were soon on the grounds, where we found friends and acquaintances. A large group were already gathered around the livestock pens, where the judging was already in progress, also in the ladies department where the pies, cakes, jellies, jams, were being graded.

There were the usual concession stands with food, lemonade, and souvenirs. John Zoellner with his tent, all kind of foods, including his famous peanuts, still 5¢ per bag.

To complete the carnival atmosphere, George Little had again brought his merry-go-round, propelled by a small upright steam engine with its brass whistle whose toots signaled the start of another go round. The music box played its plaintive one tune over and over.

Shortly after the noon hour, people began to line the road awaiting the arrival of the speaker. Mrs. Nation had arrived in Westport on the morning train and went to the hotel to rest, and now Mr. Boicourt had gone after her. The one thing that impressed a 10-year old the most that day was their arrival on the grounds. Mr. Boicourt was always a showman and this had to be his crowning day. The shiny buggy, the top laid back, Mr. Boicourt holding the reins in one hand, the whip with a ribbon tied around the stock in the other, the spirited horse, head reined up to the sky, sweeping into the grounds amid thunderous applause. Carrie Nation could know she was among friends, the people loved her. After her lecture which was well received, Mrs. Nation returned to Westport, boarded the evening train to Greensburg, and on to her next engagement. The "Old Settlers Meeting" was always known for its large attendance, but this Temperance Day, August 25, 1905, out drew by far any single day. Some estimates as high as 10,000.

Last but not least, let's not forget the balloon ascension. Mr. Boicourt had at least one every reunion. These were always held late in the evening to hold the crowd as long as possible.



After another two and one half hour buggy ride, Old Billie delivered us safe and sound at home, wore to a frazzle.

\*\*\*\* In the July, 1982, Bulletin No. 91 appears an article by our member Margaret Becker "A Conversation with Carrie Nation". This is a very excellent article. Anyone who might be interested in the Carrie Nation story should read it.

§ § § § § § § § § §

The following paragraphs have been taken from newspaper clippings of the Greensburg Daily News concerning past history of the presently occupied commercial and equipment telephone building in Greensburg.

"The first 'hello' ever heard in Greensburg was on a private line built by Henry G. Stockman in November, 1877, to connect his grain elevator (now the Nading elevator) with the county treasurer's office, when he was county treasurer." ---September 24, 1927

"The location of the new telephone plant on North Broadway opposite the Y.M.C.A. is on the site of the old Warthin homestead, one of the historic old homes of Greensburg. Edward M. Warthin bought this home October 27, 1830, from Jesse Roszell who bought it in 1827 from Silas Stewart, county agent for sale of town lots in Greensburg--the new county seat of justice established and named June 14, 1822. He was, therefore, the second person to own the land after it was entered by Thomas Hendricks, October 26, 1820 and donated to the county two years later."

"Soon after retiring in 1860, he built the two-story brick residence which is being remodeled, a part of it torn away and considerable added to it to make a home for the telephone plant. The lot is 80 X 160 feet and is just one-half block north of the public square." ----December 28, 1935

"The equipment is housed in a specially built fireproof room, whose parapet walls extend through the roof. The room is provided with automatic fire doors. It is pointed out that should the remainder of the building burn, the telephone system would continue to operate."

"Striking in the daylight is the white glazed stucco exterior, patterned in ashlar effect." ---September 7, 1936

Prepared by: Levi Nigg

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